



November 14, 2014

Marlene H. Dortch  
Secretary  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street, S.W.  
Washington, DC 20554  
Re: Written Ex Parte Communication: WC Docket Nos. 14-115, 14-116

Dear Ms. Dortch:

I am filing the attached July 29, 2014 letter to Chairman Wheeler as an ex-Parte filing in the above referenced proceedings as a demonstration of the enormous community benefit that can be realized when communities have the authority to determine the best local method of obtaining modern broadband infrastructure. Our success story is especially relevant: our community is thriving as the result of a network that would have been impossible to construct, maintain, and expand if our efforts had been hampered by anti-municipal broadband laws.

Champaign-Urbana is unique, and we have been very fortunate that our efforts were not stymied by anti-competitive broadband laws. Under the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP), with state and local matching funds, we were able to construct a robust fiber backbone spanning our entire community. This backbone network was designed with the future in mind, and was specifically laid out to support growth and expansion.

In addition to a backbone, we were able to also use those funds to connect numerous Community Anchor Institutions (CAIs), including school districts in both cities, hospitals, religious organizations, shelters, and various other institutions that serve our community. We also brought low-cost fiber to the home in certain neighborhoods where broadband adoption was traditionally low, and where incumbent providers had no interest in investing.

After the grant period ended, we were able to negotiate a public-private partnership between our nonprofit organization and iTV-3, an Illinois-based, family-owned, private company. This partnership allows us to bring competitive gigabit service to our entire community, and it puts control of this infrastructure in the shared hands of our community and a company whose vision aligns with ours. Again, without the freedom to make choices as a community about what is best for our residents and businesses, these efforts would not have been possible.

Sincerely, 

Brandon Bowersox-Johnson  
Chair, Board of Directors  
Urbana-Champaign Big Broadband (UC2B)



Urbana-  
Champaign  
Big Broadband



July 29, 2014

Tom Wheeler  
Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Chairman Wheeler:

We write to you today to thank you for your support for the deployment of 21st century broadband infrastructure in our country, and for your interest in removing state barriers to local competition and innovation through the empowerment of local internet choice.

We remember you noting back in May how Urbana-Champaign's Big Broadband project (UC2B) is a national model for the enormous benefits that are catalyzed when local communities are unrestrained to improve broadband networks.

"This public-private partnership provides a valuable model for communities and companies throughout the country and a demonstration of the creativity that is stimulated when localities are free to work with the private sector to improve broadband offerings"

UC2B was lucky. There is and was no state law that obstructed the delicate building of its multi-faceted pieces partnerships and network. Our solution grew into a public-private partnership that not only stimulated local private sector development with iTV-3 (a sister company to Family Video), but provided an alternative that we know will give every area of Champaign-Urbana an equal opportunity to receive world-class and competitive gigabit service.

As you know, our local solution led to enormous cost savings for the communities' anchor institutions, and has fostered development of 21st century applications easily absorbed by a university community. For example, Champaign's #4 School District is saving more than \$40,000 a month on connectivity fees thanks to UC2B's network; and the City of Champaign, tens of thousands annually in connection fees. And because the network interconnects over 150 diverse local institutions -- from public hospitals to local worship,

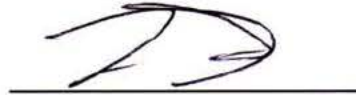
social service and youth centers -- locally applicable innovations are springing up such as remote healthcare applications for the immobile and hard to reach and digital training for seniors through their churches and community centers.

What is clear from our example is that it is vital that all communities have the unrestricted opportunities we were able to access. That can only happen if local communities are given free rein to determine their own broadband future, and we support all your efforts towards this critical and historical endeavor.

Sincerely,



Brandon Bowersox-Johnson  
Board Chair, UC2B NFP



Levi Dinkla  
Vice President, iTV-3